

Catastrophic Events and Continuity of Operations

Purpose

To provide guidance for a safe, efficient, and supportive response to disruptive events that impact Truman State University faculty, staff, and students.

Procedures for Declaration of an Emergency

Truman State University maintains an **Emergency Operations Plan** that covers responses to a range of scenarios which could negatively impact university operations. Emergency situations may first involve an alert provided by the Director of Public Safety or her/his designee. For emergencies of greater length and scope, the President of the University, or her/his designee (in case of the President's absence), has ultimate decision-making authority with respect to university closure, a shift in instructional modalities, or discontinuance of academic programs. Communications from the University regarding an emergency, and the University's response are authorized by the President or delegated to the appropriate University personnel.

The University will inform the Higher Learning Commission in writing as soon as possible after being impacted by any circumstance representing a severe institutional disruption and request consideration for application of its Policy Number: [INST.H.10.010](#) (Responding to Emergencies and Severe Institutional Disruptions).

Continuity of Operations

The University's goal is to maintain or restore normal educational and business operations as quickly after an emergency as feasible. In the event of damage to physical campus infrastructure reasonable attempts will be made to relocate classes and operations to alternative locations. In the event of widespread damage to infrastructure, or other conditions which make learning and work on campus unsafe or impractical, the University has the means to shift to partial or fully remote operation.

The University uses educational technologies such as the Brightspace Learning Management System and various cloud-based collaboration tools (such as, but not limited to, Microsoft 365, the Google for Education Suite, video conferencing and capturing software, a virtual lab streaming educational applications, and web-based telephone solutions) to limit interruptions to instruction or normal campus services. Instructional systems (both on and off premise) are designed to shield data from common threats through a formal *Information Security and Privacy Program* designed to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information that is processed, stored, and transmitted.

In the event of disruption to some or all the University's Information Technology resources, all reasonable attempts will be made to restore services as quickly and safely as possible with information on progress toward restoration distributed through available university communication systems and, if necessary, local media.

Program Discontinuance

In the event an academic program must be discontinued or cannot be delivered – whether due to formal inactivation of the program, financial exigency, or emergency – the University will pursue multiple avenues to provide a reasonable alternative for instruction. If the University can deliver the program until currently enrolled students have completed their degree (i.e. a “phase-out”), it will attempt to do so – even if the program requires delivery in an alternative modality. The University may place reasonable limits on the duration of such a phase-out. If circumstances make phasing-out the program impractical, the University will work with students to facilitate the transfer of earned credit to another institution. The University may also work with other institutions to create “teach-out” arrangements in which students can finish their specific degree program elsewhere. The University will work with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to document a Teach-Out Plan in accordance with HLC Policy Number [FDCR.B.10.010](#). In rare instances where the University is unable to make any such arrangements available to students, other measures of redress may be pursued. Truman students will be notified by university officials and will receive counseling about their options from academic advisors. If alternative delivery, phase-out, teach-out, or transfer arrangements are available and a student chooses **not to** pursue the offered alternatives, the University is not obligated to provide further remedies.

Academic Records Retention and Refunds

The University electronically retains academic records for all students. These records are also shared with the National Student Clearinghouse. Refunds for undelivered services, when and if they are necessary, are made using normal University refund procedures.

Related Policies

- [Emergency Notification Policy](#)
- [Emergency Operations Plan](#)
- [Data Security Policy](#)
- [Information Security Incident Response Guidelines](#)
- Information Security and Privacy Program (access restricted*)
- [Refund Policies](#)
- [Refund Instructions](#)
- [Records Retention Policy](#)
- [State of Missouri Records Retention Schedule](#)
- [System Maintenance Window Policy](#)
- [University Cancellation Policy](#)

*Access is restricted to maintain the integrity of security procedures.

Disclaimer

The policy herein (including any university procedures, processes, benefits, courses of conduct, or oral or written statements arising from or related to these policies) **does not** constitute any legally

enforceable contract, obligation, or liability on the part of the University, except to the extent that they are incorporated by reference into a written agreement signed by an authorized university official.